



Health Care Provider Checklist: Diagnosis and Treatment of Botulism

Diagnosis

- ☐ Establish the presence of **signs and symptoms** consistent with botulism¹:
- recent (1-10 days) consumption of traditionally prepared Native foods (seal, whale, salmon, beaver tail or paw, seal oil, etc.) or home canned foods (tomatoes, green beans)
 - neurological-dry mouth, dysphagia, diplopia, blurry vision, dilated or unreactive pupils
 - gastrointestinal/urinary-abdominal pain, diarrhea, intestinal ileus, nausea, vomiting or urinary retention
 - muscular-dyspnea, fatigue, respiratory muscle paralysis, symmetrical skeletal weakness

Report and obtain antitoxin

- ☐ **Call SOE and report** any suspect botulism cases immediately:
- **907-269-8000**, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
 - **1-800-478-0084**, after hours to speak to the on-call nurse or physician.
- ☐ Alert the hospital pharmacy to obtain and release antitoxin for patient use.

REQUIRED specimens

Before administration of antitoxin, collect blood!

- ☐ **20 mls of whole blood (no anticoagulant) or 10 mls serum, note collection time!**
- ☐ **10-50 grams of stool** (prefer before antitoxin, can be collected at any time)



Think **20-10** before antitoxin!

- ☐ **20 mls of emesis** or gastric aspirates
- ☐ Collect **suspected food** samples if available, send to lab.

Specimens should be refrigerated, not frozen.

Antitoxin Administration

- ☐ **Closely monitor patient for any signs or symptoms of anaphylaxis, note time antitoxin was initiated.**
Administer BAT[®] according to insert, <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Documents/botulism/BATPacket.pdf>
- ☐ **Your Pharmacist** will need to complete form and fax to 907-341-2249 to replenish your BAT[®] supply.

Specimen shipping information

- ☐ Send specimens: Alaska State Public Health Laboratory (ASPHL), 5251 Dr MLK Jr Ave., Anchorage. Call ASPHL at 907-344-2100 for more information. Seal all oil or liquid food samples with duct tape. Address to **Special Pathogens**, ASPHL and include *Anchorage Lab Request Form*.

For more info: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Labs/Documents/LaboratoryTests.pdf>

¹Botulism in Alaska: A guide for physicians and health care providers 2011.
<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/botulism/monograph.aspx>